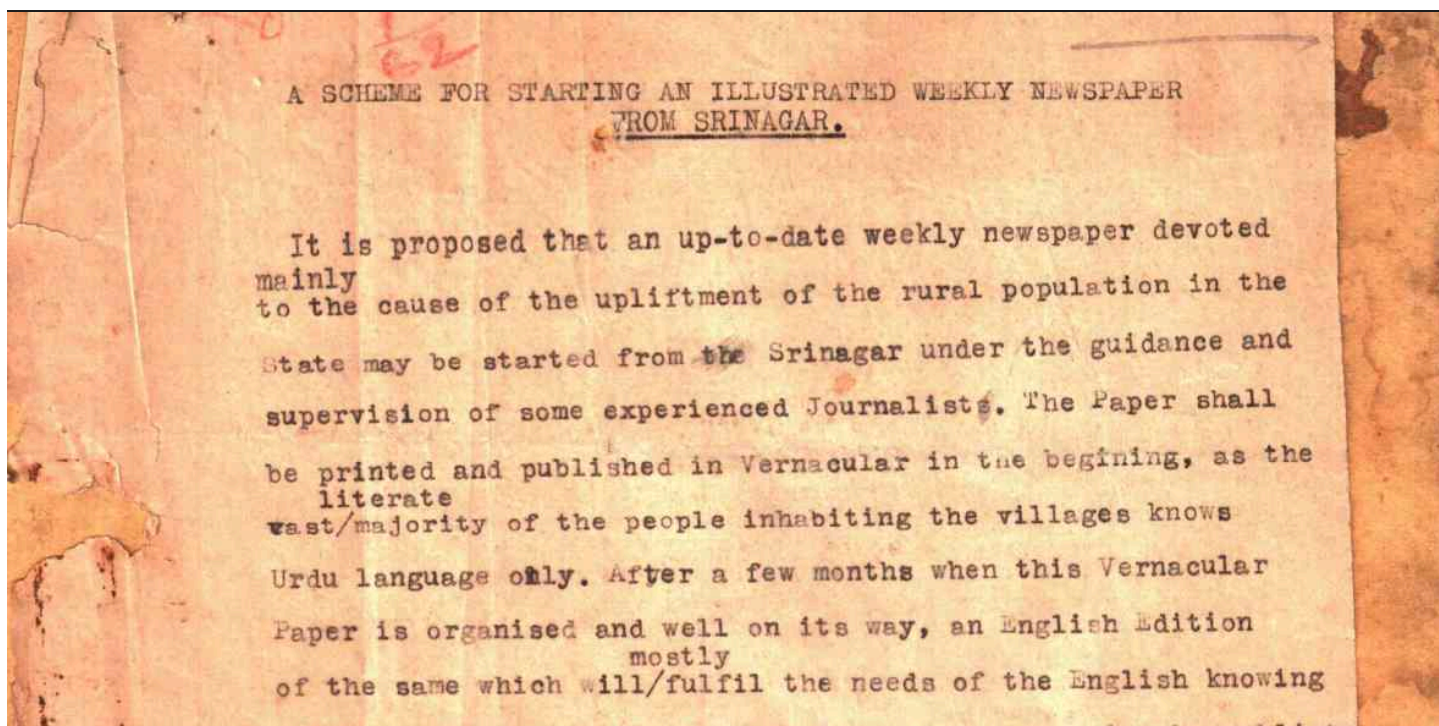


# In Pursuit of a Nation: Conflicting Formulations of Nationalism in the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir (1930 – 1940) — by Gowhar Yaqoob

March 16, 2019



**Abstract:** This paper explores the different constitutive elements of nationalist ideology in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in the twentieth century by placing it in the social and political context. Here, I analyze two strands of nationalist discourse in the region in the time of its emergence – first, a response to the trends that reinforced centralized urban empowerment as evident in the writings of Prem Nath Bazaz and the second, articulation of nationalist ideology built around Kashmiri language aiming at empowering the non-urban, marginal social groups by Abdul Ahad Azad. Bazaz deployed print newspaper in the Urdu language as a significant means to create a nationalist consciousness and suggest electoral politics as a characteristic feature of a democratic state. Whereas, Abdul Ahad Azad saw in writing a history of Kashmiri language- the mother-tongue- and promotion of linguistic nationalism as a potential means to bring socio-economic and political change through revolution.

## *Abstract*

This paper explores the different constitutive elements of nationalist ideology in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in the twentieth century by placing it in the social and political context. Here, I analyze two strands of nationalist discourse in the region in the time of its emergence – first, a response to the trends that reinforced centralized urban empowerment as evident in the writings of Prem Nath Bazaz and the second, articulation of nationalist ideology built around Kashmiri language aiming at empowering the non-urban, marginal social groups by Abdul Ahad Azad. Bazaz deployed print newspaper in the Urdu language as a significant means to create a nationalist consciousness and suggest electoral politics as a characteristic feature of a democratic state. Whereas, Abdul Ahad Azad saw in writing a history of Kashmiri language- the mother-tongue- and promotion of linguistic nationalism as a potential means to bring socio-economic and political change through revolution.

\* I have partially referred to some arguments here from my previous publication titled: 'Print, Politics And The Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir (1935-1940)' in *Studies in Humanities And Social Sciences*, 22 (1) pp. 48-66. I acknowledge IAS, Shimla for permission to reproduce them here. Some of the arguments developed in the paper are part of my larger research interest that study the history of circulations of literary texts through

translations, rewritings and printing- focusing on Kashmir- in South and Central Asian contexts.

## **Introduction:**

The debates on the emergence of nationalism in South Asia focusing on the relation between nationalism and colonialism have brought significant insights in understanding specificities anti-colonial nationalism. However, such studies have led to claims of linearity in the rise of nationalist discourse in South Asia. Adequate attention has not been paid in scholarship on nationalism in South Asian on political movements in princely states. Emphasis needs to be placed on the movements that emerged in the princely states to highlight and question the homogeneous understanding of nationalism solely as anti-colonial in character. It is, therefore, important to extend the span of enquiry across region-based political movements. This paper aims to study the rise of nationalist identity in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir to highlight some key concerns. This shall enrich not only our contemporary understanding of nationalism in relation to colonial encounter but also further complicate notions of nation, sovereignty and territorial integrity in contemporary South Asian political debates. In arguing that in pursuit of a 'democratic nation', the nationalist discourses in Kashmir modeled on two different trajectories, which display not only conflicting formulations but also challenges, the rise of nationalism understood only as anti-colonial sentiment.

The paper presents an overview of the nationalist discourse in the twentieth century in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir by analyzing two major trends represented by Prem Nath Bazaz and

Abdul Ahad Azad between 1930-1940. It argues that the former was largely an urban-based; English educated elite centered political formulation and the latter represented rural-based, socially marginalized groups and bottom-up formulation of nationalist ideology. Therefore, focusing on these two strands of nationalist discourse become central in understanding the changing nature of nationalist identity in the state. In doing so, the chapter seeks to raise some general questions regarding the relationship between language, territory, sovereignty and identity in the contemporary political imbroglio in Jammu and Kashmir.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section presents a brief outline of the political formation of the princely state from 1846-1947 through British imperial strategies of treaties and agreements, between the British and the local Dogra rajas, jagirdaars and tribal chieftains. This would hopefully provide a broad context which gave rise to power sharing between the Dogra monarchs and British colonial officials. By drawing attention to the emerging resistance movements of workers, laborers and peasants against social and economic crisis under the Dogra monarchy, the section highlights 1931 protests as a departure from those earlier attempts toward larger nationalist discourse and demand for self-rule and a democratic state. The second section explores attempts at shaping a nationalist discourse by Prem Nath Bazaz along with Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah. The section using the print newspaper, an Illustrated Weekly, *Hamdard* argues that the forerunners deployed print newspaper to create secular and inclusive political platform for freedom struggle. While *Hamdard* endorsed 'colonial-bilingual' linguistic divide, language however did

not become here a tool for the nationalist discourse. The nationalist discourse endorsed unity beyond religious, social, linguistic and regional boundaries. Through participation in electoral processes, understood as a democratic means, it created a location-based imagination to achieve responsible government and self-rule. *Hamdard* became the mouthpiece of the political party the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and was instrumental in campaigning for the party during the 1938 elections for state legislative assembly. The campaigns for elections led to two closely related processes: a) princely state was imagined coterminous to territorially inclusive multiple ethnic and linguistic identities b) the nationalist movement mostly urban-based - Srinagar and Jammu- as major centers, saw rise of politics of cult personalities. The third section of the paper using Abdul Ahad Azad's first edition of published work *Kashmiri Zabaan aur Shayree* (Kashmiri Language and Poetry) presents an over-view of history-writing project of Azad as part of a nation-building process. Written in the social, political and cultural context of 1930s, Azad identified Kashmiri language as a major tool to eliminate socio-economic hierarchies and gain access to political power. Linguistic nationalism therefore endorsed distinct identity in Azad's formulation, premised on affect by invoking Kashmiri as a mother tongue (*madri-zabaan*). Thus, the attempt to search for a 'glorious' past of Kashmiri language and literature became significant here. In Azad's formulation, historically, peasants and the poets writing in Kashmiri language withstood the violence of different political regimes, religions and 'high' languages from time to time. The resilience of poets of Kashmiri language, peasants and socially marginalized groups thus becomes a site to bring about realistic

socio-economic and political change. Azad articulated struggle from below through revolution (*Inquilaab*) as a means to self-rule.

The chapter demonstrates how despite major chasms and conflicts nation building in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir remains a critique to nationalist ideologies at large and questions the fundamental premise upon which a sovereign nation-state in South Asia was predicated at the time of decolonization. The chapter explicates the trajectory of postcolonial states exemplifying radically interchangeable relationship between territory and sovereignty. The chapter opens up questions for further debates that shall have implications on challenging territory-based ideological foundations of nationalisms in South Asian context.

## I



The popularity of ‘*Cashmere*’ for its exotic Paisley-made shawls and picturesque geography in England antedated British imperialism in Himalayan region during the nineteenth-century (Daily, 2002:238). After Ranjit Singh annexed Kashmir in 1819, Gulab Singh from Jammu region – the heartland of Dogras – joined Ranjit Singh’s army as a regular trooper but soon won for himself a *Jagir* near Jammu and annexed Kishtwar and Rajouri in 1822 (Huttenback, 1961). Ranjit Singh’s general, Zorawar Singh conquered Ladakh, Western Tibet including Baltistan and Skardu in 1840 and he died. Soon after, Gulab Singh made attempts to conquer Tibet in 1841 and represented Ranjit Singh in signing the treaty with Lhasa government in 1842 to demarcate the frontiers between Ladakh and Tibet. After Ranjit Singh’s death in 1839, the Sikh empire fell apart and Gulab Singh volunteered as an intermediary between the Khalsa and the East India Company.<sup>[1]</sup> In return to his services, the Company sold valley of Kashmir to Gulab Singh in 1846 against a cash payment of 1,75,000 Nanakshahee rupees and an annual tribute of shawls and shawl fleece-bearing animals.<sup>[2]</sup> The strategic importance of 1846 treaty, as argued by Mridu Rai, was not “simply to push Gulab Singh to Rajput hills away from Punjab” (Rai, 2004:76). Rather, the British strategically realigned trade routes, controlled access points from British India into further north and created safer frontiers along the Russian, Chinese and Afghan borders that was strategically important for the British India (Huttenback, 1975).

After signing 1846 treaty with the British, Gulab Singh was not allowed to alienate *jagirdars* in Kashmir. The British neither demarcated boundaries along the eastern region nor the borders



along Ladakh and Gilgit (Huttenback, 1961). Although, the Company endorsed a policy of ‘non-interference’ in the administration of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, the British directly undertook the administration of the state from time to time (Lamb, 1991:27-9). Gulab Singh completed conquering smaller states between the Indus river and mountain crests in 1850 which included Yasin, Ishkoman, Hunza, Punial, Kuh-Ghizar, Yaghistan, Tangir, Darel, Chilas, Nagar, Aster and Bunji – the gateway to Gilgit, which fell only in 1852 due to the resistance put up by the local chieftains. However, his successor Ranbir Singh annexed the region as far as Southern Sinkiang during his reign (1856-1885). In 1870, the British stationed a Political Agent in Gilgit and in 1886 established the Gilgit Agency subjected to direct British control (Schofield, 1996: 83). The Gilgit Agency was attached to Jammu and Kashmir in 1889 but in 1935, the Dogra ruler leased it back to the British, and remained under the British rule until 1947 when it was acceded to Pakistan. The Poonch and Chenani Jagirs, in the Jammu province were administered by Jagirdars and acceded to Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir in 1935. (Census, 1943:3-4). Thus, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir roughly categorized under three geographical divisions was administratively divided into Jammu province, Kashmir province and Frontier *Illaqas*; collectively known as *Riyast-e-Kashmir*.

Nineteenth century saw major disruption in the production and consumption of Kashmiri shawls that had impacted the socio-economic conditions in the state.<sup>[3]</sup> Being an agrarian society, the economic turmoil escalated with heavy taxations and revenue collections by the Dogra state. The state was in “absolute brutality

and vandalism after 1846 when the State officials imposed private fines upon the workmen” (Thrope, 2011:74). To protest the state exploitation and proposing changes, shawl weavers (*shawlbaf*) and workers observed complete shut-down on June 12, 1847 (Panikkar, 1953:139). With no response from the state, the shawl weavers and workers led a protest march at Zaldagar, on 29 April 1865, to present a petition at the governor’s residence where the police opened gunfires on protestors resulting in several deaths, injuries and arrests, popularly known as ‘Zaldagr Uprising’ (Ahad, 1987:78). The silk factory workers organized protests against low wages; exploitative and oppressive work conditions first in 1881 and later in 1924, both quelled by the Dogra rulers. On 13 July 1931, protests were held against the trial of one non-Kashmiri, namely Abdul Qadeer (a suspected communist), when the Dogra police killed 21 persons. The peasants in Mirpur rallied in support of 1931 protests of Srinagar, which was quelled successfully by the British forces. 1931 became a watershed in the resistance movement initiated by weavers, peasants and workers under the Dogra rulers and came to be known as the freedom struggle in Jammu and Kashmir.

### **British Colonialism Hyphenated Dogra Feudalism**

The Dogra rulers had imposed prohibitions on forming political and literary associations and banned publishing newspapers in the state. In 1930, a group of young men started ‘The Reading Room Party’ in a private house in Srinagar. Initiated to discuss unemployment, exploitation and communal bias of Dogra administration against the Muslims, its horizon expanded across the political spectrum. However, after 13 July 1931, the schism between Muslims and Hindus in the state had widened to the extent that the

Dogra rulers and the Hindu community of the state were seen in close collaboration. Bazaz writes,

In the killing of 21 persons by the police on 13 July, 1931, almost all the officials being Hindus and the Maharaja a Hindu and the 21 persons killed, all Muslims, *the public opinion among the Muslims had by the time crystallized on the point that the government and the Hindu community was inseparable and that one stood for the other* (Bazaz, 2002:130, emphasis added).

To probe into the killings of 21 persons by police and redress communal grievances, the then Maharaja, Hari Singh appointed a commission presided over by the British officer Sir B.J. Glancy.<sup>[4]</sup> The Commission passed a 'Press Law' allowing formation of political parties and publication of newspapers in the state.<sup>[5]</sup> The twin power-sharing between the Dogra monarch and the British created interconnecting political context and administrative strategies. Nicholas Dirks quotes Percival Spear's argument to illustrate how the dual system of governance during colonial times in India was a matter of introducing slow structural changes (Dirks, 2006:175). This overview, however, presses upon with certain urgency to keep in mind the context in which the nationalist discourses emerged and were shaped during 1930s in the princely state.

## II

A political party by name All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (henceforth AJKMC) was established in 1932 with Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah as its President and Chowdhary Ghulam Abbas as the secretary. Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah was

born in a village Soura, nearby Srinagar in 1905. He graduated from Islamia College in Lahore and moved to Aligarh Muslim University for his Masters. After returning to Srinagar in 1930, Abdullah joined the Reading Room Party and became its general secretary. He also pioneered to start Young Men's Muslim Association in Srinagar after discussion with Choudhary Abbas who headed a wing in Jammu. In 1932, Abdullah met Prem Nath Bazaz over a discussion at Chamashahi garden to plan for achieving responsible government. Prem Nath Bazaz was born in 1905 into a Brahmin family in Srinagar. After joining college in 1922 he started contributing articles in Urdu in newspapers "*Akhbar-i-Ain*" and "*Subah-i-Kashmir*" of Lahore and "*Ranbir*" of Jammu on Kashmir politics. In 1930, he initiated reform movements within the Hindu section of the society in Srinagar and after July 1931, openly stood against the Dogra rule in the state. In 1932 Bazaz started his Daily *Vitasta* – the first newspaper of Kashmir. Prem Nath Bazaz decided to start an illustrated weekly *Hamdard* with Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, for disseminating demand for self-rule and secularism. In 1935, the Governor and District Magistrate of Kashmir authenticated Bazaz to print and publish the Illustrated Weekly *Hamdard* in conformity with the provisions of the 'Press and Publications Regulations'.<sup>[6]</sup> Before the publication of *Hamdard*, the publishers issued a public notice:

Despite escalating political and sectarian conflicts in the state, there are people who encourage Hindu-Muslim unity and express their desire to support *nashnalezam*... *Hamdard* is the beginning for such process, *sahee qaumi zindagee*, in Kashmir...In the interest of our *hum watan*, this appeal calls for the support of masses and not

be misled about *Hamdard* as a treacherous scheme against the people.[7]

The notice was issued in Urdu and the category of *nashnalezam* was introduced in Urdu. Terms like nation, people, were quite often used interchangeably with equivalences like *watan*, *watan-parast*, *qaum-parast*, *qaum*, *mulk*, *hum-watan*, and *bashindgaan-e-watan*. In order to state the aims and objectives Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah issued another public notice in Urdu:

An illustrated weekly *Hamdard* will be published soon to initiate a movement of *qaum-parasti*, to safeguard the rights of all sects and classes belonging to this *mulk* ...The sacrifices made in the struggle for freedom of Kashmir has successfully awakened our *qaum* and secured for us the freedom for forming associations, bring out newspapers and forming a State legislative assembly to make laws after recommendations of the Glancy Commission.... The struggle for freedom is no doubt a difficult path.... However, at the outset, it is important to remind our people of the unfaltering love for our *watan* and to build the trust among different communities and sects in this *mulk*...Mr. Prem Nath Bazaz, my *hum-watan* is accompanying me in this noble mission that shall lead our *qaum* and *mulk* into political, constitutional and economical independence (Private Papers of Bazaz, 1935).

The genesis of *Hamdard* began with the idea to create a 'secular' base – understood at the time as amity among various religious communities and popularize nationalism to unite people across regional, linguistic and religious differences. The notice recollects the achievements initiated in this direction and urged people to

come together for making the political demand unanimously.

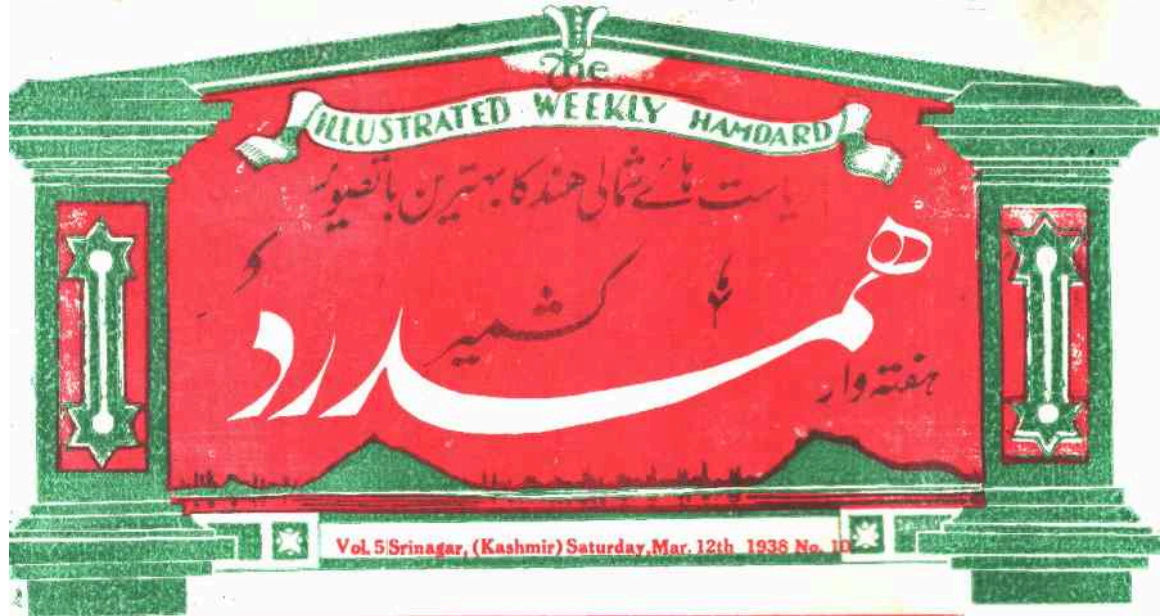
*Nashnalizm* was understood as a non-communal, non-sectarian ideology to achieve independence through democratic processes. It was the key moment in the freedom struggle of 1930s because 'secular' principles and 'national' ethos guided the politics of resistance. The struggle for freedom was not understood as an anti-colonial sentiment; rather intersectional strategies of colonial intervention provided support to resist the Dogra monarchy.





The Illustrated Weekly Hamdard





The Illustrated Weekly Hamdard

On Language:



In a scheme for starting an Illustrated Weekly newspaper from Srinagar, P.N.Bazaz framed a proposal in English:

“It is proposed that an up-to-date weekly newspaper devoted mainly to the cause of the upliftment of the rural population in the State may be started from the Srinagar under the guidance and supervision of some experienced Journalists. The paper shall be printed and published in Vernacular in the beginning, as the vast literate majority of the people inhabiting the villages knows Urdu language only. After a few months when this Vernacular Paper is organized and well on its way, an English Edition of the same which will mostly fulfill the needs of the English knowing public living in cities and the large towns may also be published side by side with it” (Private Papers, 1935:1)

*Hamdard* endorsed ‘colonial-bilingual’ linguistic divide and the initiative to start a newspaper represented the domain for defining ‘modern literate communities’, as argued by Veena Naregal in the context of Western India (1999). However, language did not form an identity marker in anti-Dogra struggle initiated by Bazaz and Abdullah. By proposing the publication of the newspaper *Hamdard* in ‘Vernacular’ (Urdu) and ‘English’, the fore-runners of the newspaper conceived of two virtually discreet spaces of literate public: the rural and the urban, which needed to be addressed separately in Urdu and English. However, Weekly *Hamdard* could not be brought out in English and the paper was published only in Urdu.

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62

A SCHEME FOR STARTING AN ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY NEWSPAPER  
FROM SRINAGAR.

It is proposed that an up-to-date weekly newspaper devoted mainly to the cause of the upliftment of the rural population in the State may be started from the Srinagar under the guidance and supervision of some experienced Journalists. The Paper shall be printed and published in Vernacular in the begining, as the <sup>literate</sup> vast/majority of the people inhabiting the villages knows Urdu language only. After a few months when this Vernacular Paper is organised and well on its way, an English Edition of the same which will <sup>mostly</sup> fulfil the needs of the English knowing public living in cities and the large towns may also be published side by side with it. Though for want of any Block manufacturing machine either in Srinagar or at Jammu, it is very difficult to make the Paper illustrated one yet <sup>owing to</sup> the fact that pictures add immensely to the charm of a weekly Journal it is proposed that two pages of the Vernacular weekly should be ~~reserved~~ reserved for ~~printing~~ illustrations of local as well as outside interest. Ordinarily the volume of the Paper will be 16 pages and size 22" X 29" <sup>four</sup> excluding ~~two~~ pages of illustrations.

In order that the Paper may become self-supporting, there should be at least two thousand names on the Register of regular subscribers of the Paper from the very start. The subscription proposed may be Rs 5/- annually.

In the begining the staff to run the Vernacular Paper alone should be one Editor, One Assistant Editor, One Manager, two clerks and two peons. As the circulation of the Paper widens more staff will be required, but for the present this much will suffice. The following ~~statement~~ is the statement of expenditures required for the Vernacular Edition of the Paper for one year:-

STAFF.

### Proposal for starting "The Weekly Hamdard"

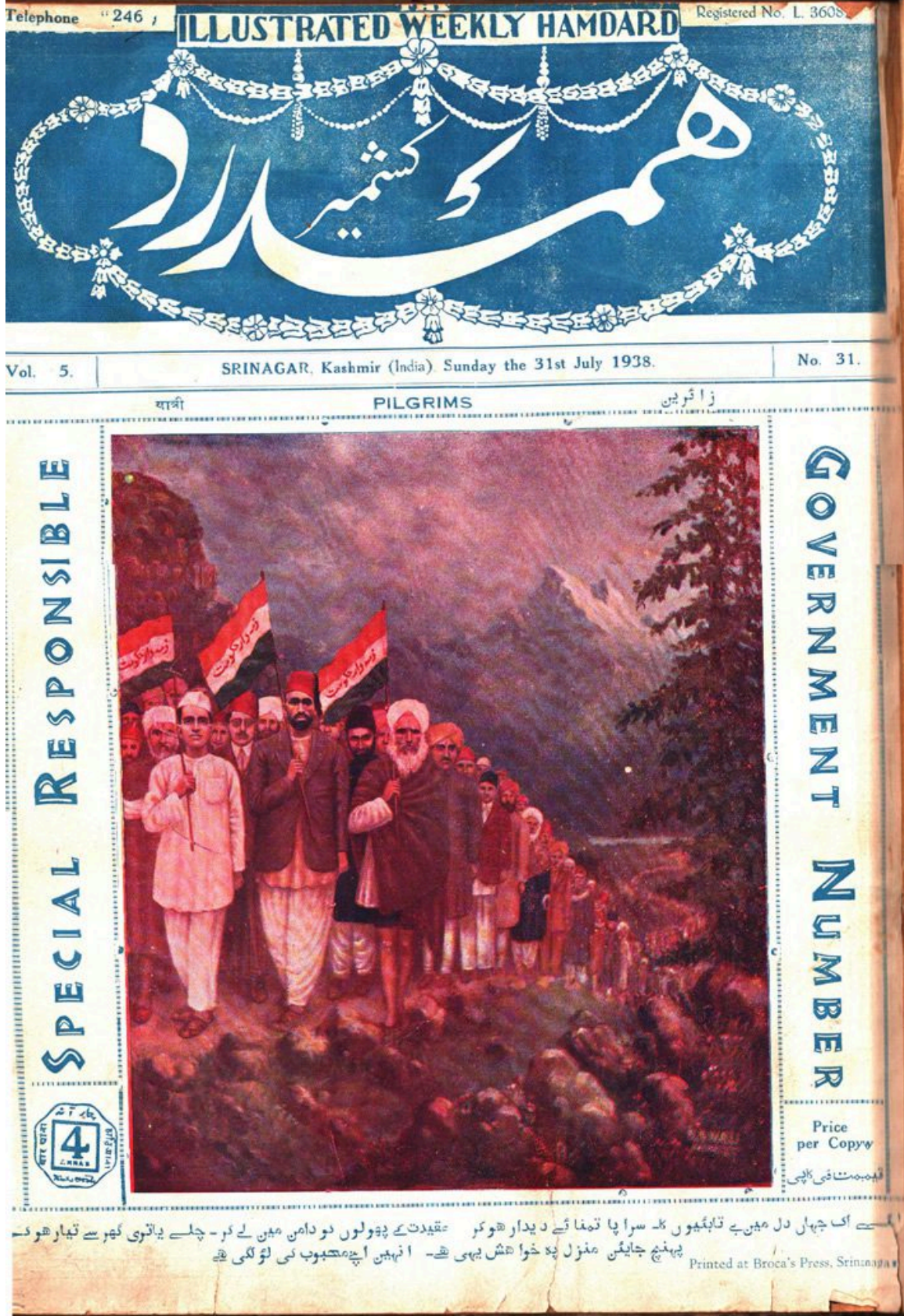
According to the first systematic census operation conducted by the British in 1891, the languages of the state were divided into 13 separate dialects, including Dogri and Chibbali which it was stated

‘did not differ much from *Hindustani* and Punjabi’ (Census, 1891:4, emphasis added). Moreover, categorization of Hindustani as ‘lingua franca’ did not seem to be an arbitrary policy or limitations of British rule as argued by Farina Mir in colonial context of Punjab (Mir, 2006:398). Introducing ‘Hindustani’ created a coterminous linguistic ground for the British to administer mountain regions of Jammu and Kashmir and the plains of Punjab; especially Lahore was an important center and access point to different trade routes. The census report of Jammu and Kashmir did not mention ‘Urdu’ instead Hindustani and Punjabi were presented to have ‘wider intelligibility across regions and communities for the purposes of travellers, literate persons, businessmen and Punjabi traders’. When the British directly took over the control of the state from 1888 to 1905 during Maharaja Pratap Singh’s reign (1885-1925) one of the first orders issued by the State Council[8] in 1889 was reported to change the Court Language from Persian to Urdu vide circular no.3 1889 (Kashmir Legal Document 28). The census conducted in 1911 mentioned “all the state business is conducted in Urdu except in the Secretariat where English and Vernacular (Urdu) branches are maintained side by side” (Census, 1911:14). It was only in 1911 census report where ‘Urdu’ appears as a vernacular opposed to English. The introduction of new language policy initially *Hindustani* and later Urdu as ‘Vernacular’ was strategically advantageous for British in linking the Himalayan region of greater linguistic diversity with greater plains of Punjab through a vernacular language (Urdu) against the universal or cosmopolitan language (English). Introduction of Urdu as vernacular by the British here needs to be understood as opposed to cosmopolitan language.

Thus the paper's policy was neither to foreground the linguistic divide for political advantage nor to use new colonial 'high' language divide as a position of hegemonic influence. For the publishers of *Hamdard*, 'Vernacular' becomes a linguistic code contrary to cosmopolitan English (Yaqoob, 2015). Language was not chosen as a marker to establish relationship between the individuals as part of a nation.

### **Electoral Process:**





‘Glancy Commission’ in 1932 also recommended formation of a Legislative Assembly in the state to initiate electoral process for which separate electorates were introduced on the basis of religion. [9] As the census reports provided rough guide for population statistics, it was suggested that 32 members would be elected in all

from 28 constituencies across the state. AJKMC participated in the elections for state legislative assembly in 1938, with an aim to bring the state under the umbrella representation of the party's political objectives. It is interesting to note how the tours for campaign prior to elections became instrumental not only in rallying support for resistance movement beyond Kashmir province but the campaign also saw rise of cult personalities associated with campaigns. The rallies and public addresses brought together people across regions and linguistic groups and *Hamdard* played a key role in promoting an idea of spatial integrity of the nation.

On 22nd April S.M.Abdullah went to Shopian, on 25th April he would travel from Kashmir to Jammu and from there to Poonch, Mirpur, Kotli, Rajouri, Kathua, Ranbirpora and via Keran to Teetwaal, Kehwri, Muzaffarabad and other places to Baramulla, Sopore, Karna and Teetwal to address the people to support All Muslim National Conference" (Hamdard, 24-4-1938:10).

While S.M.Abdullah toured as the president of the party for electoral campaigns, the most important process that was underway was that Abdullah becoming the face of the party and nationalist politics in the state, a cult-figure that proffered mass support in 1940s, which became crucial for determining the political future of the Princely state of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947 at the trepidations of Abdullah.

After declaration of Assembly Elections in 1938, the success of the party was entirely credited to the tours of S.M.Abdullah and *Hamdard* took upon the task of deciding future direction of the political movement, which majorly involved changing the name of

the party to allow more people to associate with it. AJKMC had succeeded in winning all the seats in 1938 elections and intended to include non-Muslim candidates in future in order to become a democratic and secular party to achieve self-rule. In his 'presidential address', Abdullah announced that the primary duty of Muslims was to open the party for Hindus and Sikhs of the country (*mulk*) who also wished for self-rule and adhered to nationalism (*qaum parasti*). The debates for the change of nomenclature of Muslim Conference to National Conference were debated rigorously in the subsequent issues of *Hamdard* after 1938 elections. It started appearing regularly from March 19, 1938 to July 1938 in the newspaper mostly on page 5. Several headlines become representative to provide an overview of the trajectory of the debates: "An Important Question for the Muslim Conference: Need for Establishing National Conference", "Adding an Exceptional History to the Muslim Voices", "Need for the change of Muslim Conference into National Conference." "An Important Question for Muslim Conference: In the Struggle for Responsible Government", "Only Way for Inclusion of Non-Muslims: Throw open the Doors of Muslim Conference", "An Address by S.M. Abdullah: Time to Change Muslim Conference for a Mutual Front", "Muslim Conference Or National Conference: Need to Contemplate", "An Overview of Changes in the Muslim Conference", "A Historical Address on the Change of the Muslim Conference into National Conference: An Overview of the Working Committee." "Muslim Conference or National Conference: Nation in Contemplation". Therefore, the change of nomenclature was seen as a historical moment in social, political and cultural history of Kashmir's struggle for freedom. There is a commonplace argument put forth

by historians to suggest that the Conference's transition from Muslim Conference to National Conference was premised on and influenced by Indian Congress and steered on the pattern of anti-colonial politics in British India as argued by Chitralkha Zutshi (2003: 250-1). There is however a need to understand the existing schism between different communities of the state which mobilized the change. Bazaz strongly expressed his views about maintaining distinct political position not only from Indian Congress, anti-colonial Indian nationalism but also from the political position of other princely states in British India. In one of the issues under the heading 'The Power of Congress Over Princely States' Bazaz writes:

There is barely any discussion around the events in Mysore, which is creating an impact on the Indian politics. The Indian Congress didn't interfere in the affairs of the princely states and the rulers of the princely states felt no need to thwart the influence of Indian Congress, if any, in their respective states until the Federal form of governance proposed by the British is not implemented and the Viceroy continues to control princely states. The British, rather than consulting their respective Residents in the princely states where people have put up resistance for self-rule, are on the contrary negotiating on power with the leaders of Indian Congress....It is clearly evident that the consequences in Mysore shall eventually extend to other princely states" (*Hamdard*, 12-06-1938, p.9).

In Bazaz's opinion, princely state of Mysore was an experimental ground for the British to decide on the fate of princely states in British India after decolonizing the subcontinent.<sup>[10]</sup> *Hamdard* and National Conference played crucial part in promoting nationalist



ideology as a democratic and progressive model for achieving responsible government and self-rule. Toward the later issues, the paper became more open in criticizing the Dogra rule, therefore notices were issued to both Abdullah and Bazaz to restrain from using volatile language against the His Highness, the Maharaja and to not to make public speeches. In response to the notices, both Bazaz and Abdullah refuted to concur to the government orders and published their responses in *Hamdard*.<sup>[11]</sup> Bazaz was jailed for six months and the press remained shut for nine months- from August 1938 to May 1939- owing to the demand for big security after his imprisonment.

*Hamdard* identified territorial integrity more crucial than linguistic and ethnic markers. Since bilingual skills (Urdu and English) well fitted the literate communities in urban centers, it was easier for the party to frame a structure that linked electoral process and statecraft, to administer responsibly and democratically in a secular environment. Such nationalist formulation envisioned an autonomous state governed through democratic and centralized system characterized by secularism. *Hamdard* served as a prelude to a series of important cultural and political initiatives in which P.N. Bazaz and S.M. Abdullah remained closely associated until 1941. In January 1941, S.M. Abdullah distanced himself from *Hamdard* and parted ways with Bazaz (Private Papers, 1941). Bazaz became the sole proprietor of the paper, which was then turned into a daily newspaper. He quit National Conference and started Kashmir Socialist Party in 1942, whereas Abdullah grew closer to the leaders of Indian Congress against which Bazaz had already forewarned him (Bazaz, 1971:1).

### III

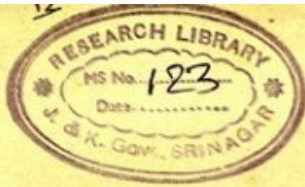
A self-styled historian, Abdul Ahad Azad began composing a literary history of Kashmiri language and literature (*Tareekh Adbiyaat*) in 1930s. Born in 1902 in Rangar village, thirteen miles from Srinagar in Kashmir, Azad received his early education from his father at home. In 1916 he joined his elder brother's *maktab* in the village where Azad was introduced to grammar, arithmetic, Persian literature, Urdu literature and theology. In 1925-1926, he passed his *Munshi Alim* exam with distinction from the Punjab University in Lahore. He was appointed as a school-master and taught at various schools in different villages throughout his life. For writing history, Azad began collecting oral, anecdotal, hagiographical, written, published, un-published narratives, poetry, songs and life histories of the poets writing in Kashmiri language and concurrently would record in his notebook. Over a period of time, Azad began formulating social and linguistic reform movements for demand for change in socio-political conditions of the state. Azad met Prem Nath Bazaz for the first time in January 1943 and the two became friends until Azad died in 1948. After his death the manuscript was placed in the archive (Department of Research and Publication). When the Cultural Academy of Jammu and Kashmir was established in 1958, it compiled Azad's manuscript and brought out a book *Kashmiri Zabaan aur Shayree* (Kashmiri Language and Poetry) in three volumes in 1959, 1962 and 1963.<sup>[12]</sup>

In an 'Introduction' to the printed volume, Azad lamented about the absence of history (*tareekh*) of Kashmiri language and literature. Azad's lament opens up a window into the importance accorded to written history as a prerequisite for imparting reputable status to

language, literature and speakers of language. The colonial officials at the time saw absence of written history as a stigma, historically, attached to non-literate and uncivilized peoples (Scott, 2009).

Azad's insistence on *tareekh* also points out the significance attached to the genre because *tareekh* was not only understood as the factual recording of past events supported by authentic sources but also retelling past from an objective point of view (Azad, 1959:2). Writing the past becomes a fundamental axis presumed to integrate all hierarchies into an egalitarian social structure (Scott, 2009).

Azad's history-writing project highlighted a) linguistic nationalism (Kashmiri language) and b) empowerment of rural, land-based identity to bring about social and political change through revolution (*Inquilaab*). Therefore, history writing was a point of departure that could make transition from non-advantageous position to power-sharing possible.



## دیباچہ مصنف

مہاراجا وطن خطہ کچھ دنیا بھر میں صانع قدرت کی کار پرسی کا بھینٹ ہے۔ اس کے مناظر قدرت اور لطافت کی بارگاہ اور لطافت صانع بیان و توصیف ہیں۔ سرسبز شاداب و دریا کے ارد گرد رب نریش پادشاہی کا شان سے گزرنے والی آفتابیں ہیں۔ بل کھاتے مزی نائے - ٹبرین چشے - صاف گنڈ بھلی - سدا بہار جھل - پرفضا چشے اور چراگاہیں - بہاوت لہجے - لہجے ہائے باغ اور لکھی علاقہ بھلوریاں - توجہ جاتی ہیں - صحت اور روح بڑھانے والے مقامات - پھولوں کی کثرت - پھولوں کی بہتات - آب و ہوا کا پر عالم کہ

## گرمخ کباب است کہ بیال و پر آید

قدرت نے اتنے عظیم شایدار کا دنیا میں اور کسی خطہ کو عطا نہیں کئے ہیں۔ - جسے جھوٹا جانتا ہے کہ اس بھرپور سے قطعہ کو دنیا کی جنت کہنے والے حق بجانب ہیں۔ چونکہ پاکیزہ و جود کے نور کا پاکیزہ کرنا قدرتی اور ہے اس کا علیہ کے اس سے یہ زرخیز خطہ مردم خیز مہی و راجہ ہو رہے۔ رانی جیشو متی جس کا زمانہ تین ہزار سال قبل مسیح بتایا جاتا ہے بھلا فوق حسب دنیا بھر میں شاہ پہلی عورت ہے جس نے عورتوں میں حکمرانی کی قابلیت اور ہیئت ثابت کی ہے۔ - راجہ پھول مورخین کا ابو الاپا کہتا ہے۔ - حکیم چکر علی حواجی کا مانیہ مجدد اول ہے۔ - راجہ لعل دتہ کو ایک فاتح اعظم سے یاد کیا جاتا ہے۔ - سلطان بہن لعل بدین کی روداد اس کی دلی اور عمل و انعام ضرب اعظم ہے۔ - موہن جی کے ساتھ ہندو (ہرپن) کے ادیبوں نے سر تسلیم خم کیا۔ - سکوت ادب کی تکمیل میں ہمارے اسلاف نے نمایاں کام فارسی ادب میں گاؤں کرے تو اپنے وطن کو ایران ثانی کا خطاب دلایا۔ - مدح فانی - شیخ یعقوب عرفی - برم تہمت - پودھ - پندت پور بھوانی درسا۔ - خان جیشو خوجہ حسن شویا جیسے اہل قلم اسی گزین سے اٹھے۔ - معزز ادیب اور اصفا کا شہر ہی ہیں۔ - دیہات قریہ کا کیا کہن نشان جھل تک مزارات مدرسے محمور ہیں +

نوشین لڑکوں نے اس خطہ کی توہینیں ہیں نفیسی کہیں۔ - اہل قلم نے اسے جزا خاں حالت پر خاد فرمایا کی۔ - مورخوں نے تاریخی کہیں جن میں اہل سب و قلم کے حالات اور ادھاتی نیند اپوں کے سانچے کا بیٹنی قبضہ کئے۔ - مٹ پیر کی سوانح عمریوں کو مستقل تصنیف کا صورتی دیا گئی۔ - لیکن افسوس سے گفت پڑتا ہے کہ ان کا دوش اور عرق بہز یوں کے باوجود تاریخ کثیر کا سب سے عروزی حصہ سے غیر عروزی سمجھ کر انداز کیا گیا۔ - یعنی کثیر زبان گفتگو اور اسکی شاخوں کی تاریخ۔ - اس موضوع پر قلم اٹھانے کی



## **Landscape, Language and Linguistic Revivalism:**

At the outset of the text, Azad transforms an aesthetic imagery into an idyllic landscape.

“Our beloved nation (*watan*) Kashmir is bestowed with an outstanding natural beauty. This beauty and splendor is not subservient to any description. The lush green and ravishing valley surrounded by snow-clad mountain ranges and the water-falls, the winding streams and rivers, sweet springs, clean and fresh water lakes, evergreen forests, pastures blooming, fluttering fields, blooming gardens and flower-buds, a tranquil place, provide recourse to rejuvenate the body and soul. Nature may not have bestowed gifts to any other place/region (*khita*) in the world so abundantly. That is why it is known as the Paradise on Earth. It is quite natural to develop a noble sense of self in such clean and pure surroundings. This fertile place has continued to remain intellectually creative” (Azad, 1959:1).

This landscape is not simply a patchwork of stock images indeed; it draws the readers’ attention into multiple layers of a landscape.

Azad begins with nationalist vocabulary, where the natural landscape becomes a twin site – for entering into the past and imagining future- to initiate a discourse of belonging. Retelling the past forms a conjunction between the present and the timeless landscape. The landscape is noteworthy because Azad privileges spatial existence over the temporal existence. It is important to mark that the nation (*watan*) in Azad’s canvass remained unbounded, in a state of flux and narrating the past was not devoid of counter-memories (Katharina, 2011:5). In other words, past is not

self-evident, but is embodied in human actions, inscribed onto natural environment, in the glorious narratives of peoples' lives. The landscape therefore inherited historically multiple subjectivities:

“Rani Jasomati during 3000 B.C was the first woman crowned as the queen, Raja Kalhana is known to be the greatest historian (*morkheen*), King Lalitaditya is remembered as the greatest conqueror, Sultan Zain-ul-Abideen's tolerance, humanness and sense of justice are unquestionable. The writers of Hindostaan and Iran (*Hind wa Iran*) bow their heads low in acknowledging Mawlana Gani....Writers like Mulla Mohsin Faani, Sheikh Yaqoob Sarfi, Som Pandit, Yudd Bhat, Pandit Sherowar Bhawani Das, Khan Badakshi, Khawaja Hassan Shayri, were born in this country....” (Azad, 1959:1-2).

By invoking a glorious past and situating it in the iconic landscape, the sense of belonging is not a discontinuity from the past rather a historical transition. Azad, chose language as the foundational referent for defining political subjectivities where Kashmiri language was imagined, both to capture the uniqueness of the landscape and connect landscape with the people (Gottmann, 1952:516). Language, like landscape, becomes a variegated symbol, which captured experiences and intimacy of belonging. In the ‘Introduction’ Azad mentions:

“It was despair (*kasampursi*) for ‘the language of the country’ (*mulki zabaan*) that drove him in search of the works of the poets and to anthologize their biographies in order to retrieve them from oblivion” (Azad, 1959:7).

More importantly, language was primarily an attribute of the landscape, ‘language of the country’ (*mulki zabaan*) and the speakers of the language (quam) mediated the relationship between landscape and language. The term ‘language of the country’ (*mulki zabaan*) identified people, both individually and as community (*qaum*), who spoke the language (Mitchel, 2009:36). In order to support the long-standing existence of the language and its relationship with the landscape and to frame the linguistic identity historically, writing the history of Kashmiri language became a crucial context (Mantena, 2012:151).<sup>[13]</sup> Azad initiated a linear historical narrative of language and literature and invokes ‘golden past’ what people could identify themselves with. The language’s development in the past was marred by innumerable difficulties including i) lack of political patronage, ii) onslaught of Persian (linguistic subjugation) and iii) willful negligence of poets and scholars of Kashmir. “Since Kashmiri scholars earned great name in Sanskrit and Persian learning, for which they received tributes from Hindostaan and Iran (*Hind-o-Iran*), it is difficult to imagine that their mother tongue (*madri zabaan*) was devoid of such achievements.” (Azad, 1959:6). Azad emphasized the need to resurrect the fallen grace of the language and the nation for which he invoked affect – to rekindle ‘love’ (*josh mohabbat*) for mother tongue (*madri zabaan*) (Azad, 1959:39). Underlining emotion for promoting linguistic revivalism ideally aimed to recapture lost power and prestige for claiming self-rule. This was distinct from language revival movements in other parts of British India in ways that linguistic revivalism that Azad promoted formulated a political subjectivity, which aimed at self-rule and politically autonomous country (*mulk*) without subservience to greater British India.

(Mitchel, 2009 & Ramaswamy, 1997). The hegemony of Sanskrit and the onslaught of Persian on Kashmiri language and sensibility were argued to be similar to his own times when the Dogra rulers spoke a language different from the language of people they ruled. Azad's resentment against the dominance of other languages and literary cultures including Sanskrit, Persian, Dogri and Urdu makes his linguistic revivalism more nuanced than simply rooted in religious aggression and nationalism.

“At present the rulers who rule this country feel no responsibility towards the prosperity and administration of this country. The rulers do not know the language of the people who, they rule and the people do not understand the language of their rulers. Both speak their own languages but do not understand one another. The incidents are far more elaborate and intimidating.... However, to take notice of the events so closely would be endangering one's life. In these vulnerable times it would be better to remain silent” (Azad, 1959:50).

The above quote shows that the author points toward the dilemma of political oppression and feudalism that had silenced the dissent on one hand and eschewed the space of linguistic, political, and cultural negotiations on the other hand between the rulers and the subjects. Since Kashmiri language and literature marked a site that was ridden by struggle for sustenance and comprised images of poor, rustic, unrefined associated with colloquial, women, unprivileged social groups, orally transmitted, without written text, there was a strong assertion to fashion high aesthetic ground for Kashmiri literature. Although the literatures in Persian, Sanskrit, Kashmiri and other languages had always co-existed nevertheless,



hierarchy of subject matter, thoughts and aesthetic values expressed in 'high' languages and linked with power and patronage endorsed social hierarchies, inequality and political oppression. The claim to power was fashioned to resist the vulnerability of social groups, such as Kashmiri speakers and rural population. Such claims of rural-based and marginalized social groups to power reflected counter-adaptability of power relations within social groups to create an egalitarian state-structure (Scott, 1999). However, access to power and self-rule was possible only through the revolution.

## کشمیری زبان کی شاعری کے ادوار

انتقادات کی ضرورت ہے کہ وہ کتبہ کا جس قدر گہرا ہوتے ہوئے اس کا حق دوروں کی  
تقسیم کر سکتے ہیں۔ چوتھے دور دور حاضر ہے۔ ہر دور اپنی خصوصیات میں دور سے دور سے مختلف ہے  
پہلے دور پہلے دور سے شروع ہو کر نور الدین دہلوی پر ختم ہوتا ہے۔ لہذا فرقہ شیخ نور الدین  
رضاعی ماں ہے۔ اس دور کی عمر اپنی دو صدیوں کی حد کے درمیانہ حصوں کا مجموعہ ہے۔  
لہذا فرقہ کا کلام اللہ و رکھتے کہلاتا ہے اور متعدد ترجموں اور تشریحوں کے ساتھ شائع ہو چکا ہے۔ کلام نور الدین  
کوئی مستقل مجموعہ دستیاب نہیں ہو سکا۔ شیخ کا سارا کلام اپنی سوانح عمری و نسب نامہ نشر میں درج ہے  
اسی کتاب سے ان کا قصیدہ تصور کلام پائیے جو طبع ہو کر بازاروں میں بیٹا ہے + کشمیری شاعری کے  
دور اول کی کائنات یہی روش تھا کہ میں — اللہ و رکھتے اور کلام نور الدین دہلوی +  
حقیقت کیا ہے؟ حقیقت میں اصول ارتقا کے دور سے کشمیری شاعری کی (دور درمیانہ) صدیوں سے  
شروع ہوتی ہے۔ کوئٹہ صدی کے عہدے رشتہ کوئی تدریجی ارتقا کا عمل شروع ہوتا ہے۔ اللہ و رکھتے  
اور کلام شیخ نور الدین کو مجمع تخیلات۔ عمیق جذبات۔ محسن شاعر اور انسانی خوبیوں کے لحاظ  
کوئی ترقی یافتہ ادیب (اور ان کا باب) کیا محزون ہے ایسے بلند پایہ شاعروں کو کسی ادیب کا پہلا باب  
قابل قبول امر نہیں +  
خصوصیات اللہ و رکھتے اور کلام نور الدین کی خارجی اور داخلی خصوصیات کی تاریخ و عظمت اور  
قطعی قیمت ہمارے لئے باعث فخر بھی ہے اور افسوسناک عورت بھی لکھنؤ عارفہ اور شیخ کے کلام کی تفصیلی نقد  
ان کے تذکروں میں دیکھئے یہاں اختصار کے لحاظ سے اس کا اجمالی تذکرہ کیا جاتا ہے +  
کوئی ادیب محزون یا کسی خصوصیات بیان کرتے ہوئے ادیبوں کے ذہنی رجحانات کا تجزیہ ان عوارض امر سے

Azad – On the Kashmiri Language

### The Poet – the Peasant – the Revolutionary:

For Azad poetry was the 'mirror reflection' (*aeena*) of its time, which substituted facticity of sources for writing history and

expressions 'rooted' in the immediate context, experiences and everyday language of the poet. In Azad's formulation the struggles of the peasants and the poets (writing in Kashmiri) formed the premise for literary tradition of Kashmiri as a site of representation for change. Thus, the poet and the peasant acquired primacy as revolutionaries. The conflicts between diverse faiths and language groups did not pose threat for Azad's notion of Kashmiri identity because Kashmir's past and culture had a deep-rooted local provenance where elements from Sanskrit and Persian became part of the Kashmiri literary culture. Sheldon Pollock has rightly pointed out that "categories and conceptions that literature itself helps to produce are typically presupposed to be conditions of its historical development" (Pollock, 2003:10). This becomes relevant for understanding Azad's efforts to defining both the roles of a poet and poetry in a literary culture.

"A poet is someone whose consciousness is not ordinary. Since the poets' mental powers especially sensory perceptions are more powerful than common people so the picture drawn by him bears stronger resemblance with the real as compared to pictures drawn by the common people. Poet's imagination is the reflection of his environment. Poetry is the mirror reflection of its environment and the later poets deviated from this role" (Azad, 1959: 79-61).

With much significance accorded to a poet-figure in the history owing to the understanding that poets' commitment to the language remained deeper than others, a poet could effectually mediate between imaginary and real, material and ethereal using the everyday language of the people. Poets and peasants who composed and spoke in Kashmiri language withstood all forms of

oppression and hierarchies. Therefore, it is the resilience of these unprivileged social groups that Azad tries to capture to invoke effective change in social and political context and envision the future. Historically, with the socio-political changes, the organic link between the people and the land was broken and attempts to write about the past was a attempt to recreate that broken link which otherwise was relegated to oblivion (Berger, 2016: 193). Thus, Azad primarily bestowed absolute responsibility on the poets writing in Kashmiri language to recreate a just and egalitarian society.

“The oppressors are always struggling to control the material world and democracy is at the verge of annihilation. In such milieu, the poet is someone whose heart is like a prophet and a philosopher such as, Marx” (Azad, 1959:156).

By the time Azad began writing his text, the thoughts inspired by Karl Marx had acquired universal popularity and inspired thinkers across continents. The reference to Marx reflects that a poet had to transcend a messianic role and take on pragmatic measures to deflect ways to bring about material change in the corporeal world (Azad, 1959:147). Literary expressions could not be quarantined from everyday life and experiences; and to express those realistically through poetry was an act of rebellion for emancipation of the people from political oppression and class division (*tabqaati taqseem*) (Azad, 1959:169). And the poets who made attempts to highlight brutalities and criticize those in power, were slaughtered like animals in a hunting-game. To illustrate this, Azad cites the example:

“The author of *Be-bojnama* (The Un-Burdened) is not well-known, but if he comes to the notice of the authorities (both native and foreign who have become masters); he shall be clamped down for illustrating realistically the details of the horror perpetrated by the authorities’ (Azad, 1959: 152).

A poet writing in chivalrous language supporting voices against oppression and exploitation in Azad’s formulation was akin to the peasants who rose against oppression and demanded change from time to time that shook the very edifice of feudal monarchy, imperialists and capitalists.

Most importantly, Azad pins down the history of nation, people and language in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with the poetry of Lala and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din exemplifying the revolutionary zeal of these poets when the practice of poetry and the role of a poet are seen to become autonomous. Not only is the poetry freed from high languages and rulers but also from the word of the master-priest and both the language and poetry enter into a ‘new’ relationship in the Kashmiri literary culture. These poets composed in Kashmiri when Kashmiri language and its speakers were outside the ambit of power, organized clergy, literary cult writing in high languages, and when the state administration was confined to a tiny elite section writing in high languages. Azad endorses the consequences of this shift in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to explain sustainable distinctness in Kashmir – distinct from Sanskrit and Persian literary cultures, political oppression and elite discourses. It is this distinctness of Kashmir’s literary past that becomes an important site for Azad to shape a historical memory for new political subjectivity in the twentieth century, which he

termed as '*Kashmiriyat*'.<sup>[14]</sup> Azad was thus the proponent of this new identity in twentieth century Kashmir where '*Kashmiriyat*' was not employed as a 'syncretic' or 'secular' category, neither to bridge the religious differences nor to gloss reconciliation over internal religious and political conflicts. Historically, the poets Lala and Sheikh represented voices of dissent, which had impacted significantly language, literature and culture in the fourteenth and the fifteenth century. Introducing '*Kashmiriyat*' as a literary category encapsulated the conceptual vocabulary of dissidence and distinctness of Kashmiri language that Lala and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din invoked. This new political aesthetics of identity discourse and struggle for the freedom in the twentieth century linking distinctness of landscape, language and community becomes strong political context for Azad's nationalist identity.

To suggest Kashmiri language as a marker of membership in community during Lala and Sheikh's time for which they 'chose' Kashmiri language as a means to lay foundation for collective identity would be anachronistic. According to Lisa Mitchell, Sheldon Pollock's 'vernacularization' (Pollock, 1998:46) asserts 'language choice' for new cultural identity away from Sanskrit into the regional Indian languages in the second millennium as a new strategy for preserving and extending older identities and 'adoption of a new linguistic medium for extending an already powerful identity' (Mitchel, 2009:49). Although Pollock carefully distinguishes these 'choices' from the nineteenth and early twentieth century identifications, for Pollock "there never was in South Asia a linkage of "blood" and "tongue" as already in medieval

Europe – even the concept mother tongue is unknown and cultures were not closed systems” (Pollock: 1998:64).

I argue that poets such as Lala and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din chose or used Kashmiri language as a mode of resistance against religious orthodoxy, political oppression and social divisions and therefore created a vocabulary of a dissent, against Sanskrit and Persian, Brahmanical hegemony, orthodox Islam, landlordism and political aggression. In Azad’s scheme, the linguistic identity that he associates with these poets needs to be seen in the backdrop of the struggles between Buddhism, Brahmanism and Islam prevalent at different times in Kashmir, since proponents of each of these religious groups always took advantage of ‘high’ languages excluding Kashmiri language, to strengthen the religious, political and cultural foothold.

Despite strong formulation of linguistic nationalism and change through revolution Azad’s nationalist discourse was nowhere confined to territorial boundaries. Azad chose marginal language for representation, to shape a space for the marginal groups where this different view of identity and belonging could be contextualized historically. The exploited peasants and poets of Kashmiri language resting in oblivion become central figures whose struggles and resilience anchor a platform to confront political oppression. However, Azad write the text in Urdu language. It was the time when print medium played a significant role among different social groups. Nonetheless, was the actual use of Kashmiri language unimportant for Azad to represent the past? Was it only the idea of a Kashmiri language and poetry that was important? Was Kashmiri language only a trope to represent the identity politics in



the changing scenario of twentieth century? These are some of the questions that remain unanswered.

### **Conclusion:**

Nationalist movement in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir after 1940s took a different shape than what Bazaz had envisioned for securing self-rule and language never surged as a marker of identity. Must one wonder how linguistic nationalism and the struggle through democratic means for self-rule in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir waned and disappeared at the cusp of the departure of British that marked independence of India and creation of Pakistan in 1947? The resistance put up by the people of Jammu and Kashmir against undemocratic accession of the state in 1947 not only gave rise to political conflict but the nuances of nationalist discourse in the contemporary context continues to confound postcolonial scholarship on the importance of and affect for languages in the formation of political identities in modern South Asian studies. In December 1953, the first prime minister of independent India, Jawaharlal Nehru, appointed a commission for the re-organization of India's states according to the linguistic groups. The state of Jammu and Kashmir continued to be run on colonial lines for it was stated in the report that 'Urdu' shall continue to be the official language of the State. However, in post 1947 nationalist discourse of Jammu and Kashmir, the concepts of territory and land continue to be indispensable formulation of identities.

In the twentieth century, the premodern land-based conception of sovereignty of the self and belonging evolved and morphed into a



modern nationalist vocabulary where territory was indispensable to the sovereign claims. However, the strategic repositioning of social groups and reformulations of identities through nationalist discourse continue to represent contrasting political processes: one endorsing resistance within a more formal representation through political party-base and the other by armed rebellion. These twin resistance processes, one that sustains the centralized urban politics through 'secession' on the one hand, and the other a pull to resist centralized state-options through 'rebellion' represent conflicting nationalist discourse in Jammu and Kashmir, which needs to be highlighted further. That shall enable us to gain a better understanding of non-singular history of sense of belonging to landscape and framing of a territory in the twentieth century resistance movements in J&K. Apart from other larger forces such as religion, text based history, oral culture, multilingual, multi ethnic and porous landscape, a 'new' wave of armed rebellion can be read as symptomatic of a pull away from centralized state constantly in conflict with state ideology; whereas Kashmir's resistance movement represented by the secessionist political parties a pull toward a nation-state ideology.

Both India and Pakistan have further reduced the complexity of the nationalist movements of Jammu and Kashmir to their respective sovereign rights over the territory. Indian and Pakistan's claims to territory are presently seen as larger threat to belonging and identity in Kashmir. These are strongly resisted and I argue that demand for a nation-state is strategically a centralized urban-based politics in contrast to claims to land-based conception of sovereignty of the self through armed rebellion that does not seek

recognition from a nation-state discourse and is a perception to exist beyond the state-controlled hegemony or what James Scott calls 'anti-politics'. The South Asian scholarship on nationalism in highland terrains primarily as an opposition to nation-state has not adequately addressed conflicting claims to sovereignty and belonging. However, it is important for future discussions to interrogate how the two conceptual categories - 'territory' and 'sovereignty'- used interchangeably have come to shape the discourse of nationalism in South Asia in the post-colonial context? What characterizes the relationship between the sovereignty, territory and citizenship in South Asian nation-states?

1.

## **Appendix**

The British signed treaty of Lahore after the first Sikh War, which ended with the defeat of the Sikhs at the Battle of Sabroan on 9 March 1846. ↑

2. Popularly known as the Treaty of Amritsar (*Bienaama Amratsar*) signed on 16th march 1846, 7 days after the Treaty of Lahore. ↑

3. European and American art historians who argue for conventional 'rise and fall' narrative, according to Michelle Maskiell over emphasize the importance of European consumption and exclude set of British imperial and economic policies, which systematically minimized markets in Europe for Kashmiri shawls in the 19th century. ↑

4. Sir Barjor Dalal, Chief Justice of Kashmir headed a commission that was appointed on 14th July 1931 which submitted the report 'Dalal Committee Report' on 24th September, 1931 strongly condemned by the people and a copy of it burnt in Jammu.

Maharaja Hari Singh called for Memorials on 5th October, 1931 for redress of any grievances and appointed a Commission of four non-official members Khawaja G. A. Ashai and Prem Nath Bazaz from Kashmir and Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas and Lok Nath Sharma from Jammu on 12th November, 1931, presided over by Sir B.J.Glancy. ↑

5. On the orders of Maharaja Hari Singh, Sir B.J.Glancy recommended 'Press Law' (analogous to the one prevailing in British India ) promulgated in May 1932, regarding the modification of the then existing regulations related to matters such as the establishment of societies and associations and free expression of opinion either in public meetings or in the press. More than 100 papers started since May 1932 most of them with very brief spans of life. ↑

6. In a Memo Reference No.Jc/1002 dated Srinagar the 29th of April 1935 written to Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz. Private Papers of P. N. Bazaz (Private Collection of Bushan Bazaz, New Delhi). ↑

7.

Public Notice entitled '*Hum Watno ke Naam Dard Mandana Appeal*'. Private Papers of P. N. Bazaz, (Private Collection of Bushan Bazaz, New Delhi)

I have not translated words like *Qaumi Zindagee*, *Qaum*, *Qaum Parastee*, *Mulk*, *Hum-Watan*. '*Nashnalezam*' is written as such in Urdu, meaning 'Nationalism'. This becomes important to see the interchangeability between registers, constructs and concepts marking the import of concepts and meanings and implications of these in 'colloquial equivalences' such as *Qaum–Parastee*, *Watan–Parastee*. Cf. (Chakrabarty, 2002). This work implores how one

might write about forms of modernity that have deviated from all canonical understandings of the term. 'While such categories are eminently translatable across societies and should, indeed, be so translated in the interest of social justice, they are also dogged by problems that arise from such acts of translation. This happens because societies come with their own plural histories that have already been imbibed by their members through certain shared dispositions, skills, competencies, and sentiments.' (All translations from Urdu into English are mine unless mentioned.) ↑

8. The Council consisted of members appointed by the Government of India, Legal Document No. 28 ↑

9. In Constitutional Reform Conference in 1932 one of the important questions raised had been: whether electorates should be separate or joint.... it was maintained that ... in the existing state of tension, the institution of joint electorates must be regarded as a dangerous experiment. Separate electorates are accordingly recommended. 'Report of the Kashmir Constitutional Reform Conference, 1932', Kashmir Legal Document No 50. ↑

10. 'The paper consisted of regular pages on 'World Events' including major news from all over the world and India. On the front page of the paper *Hamdard*, the place of publication was mentioned Kashmir (*India*); whereas inside the paper, news from India was classified under the 'World Events'. Some Headlines included: 'A New Movement in Mysore' 17-4-1938 p. 6, 'Two Major Conditions for Participation in Federation; Princely States and Mahatma Gandhi' 24-4-1938 p. 5, 'Freedom Movement in Hyderabad' 19-6-1938 p. 7, 'Responsible Government in Cochin' 26-6-1938 p. 9, 'Constitution of Princely State of Banaras' 26-6-1938, p.9, 'Constitutional Amendments in bigger Princely States

Cochin, Travancore, Mysore, Hyderabad also need to be extended to smaller Princely States.' 19-3-1938 p.6. ↑

11. *Hamdard*, 21-08-1938, pp. 7 and 9. P.N.Bazaz wrote under the heading: "Disturbing the Comfort of those who Benefit from this Irresponsible Government" that the Article 108-A IPC was worthless and nothing could deter him from moving ahead in his mission. S.M.Abdullah responded under the heading "The Existing Government must be Removed through Peaceful Means: Sooner the Better". ↑

12. All translations from Urdu and Kashmiri to English are mine unless mentioned. I have translated *watan*, *mulk* and *qaum* for this work into English equivalents of nation, country and community. ↑

13. The colonial philological knowledge during the twentieth century had considerable implications for languages in Asia; therefore framing a history for language became an important task: to determine the identity of the language and community. ↑

14.

I am not translating the term 'Kashmiriyat' into its English equivalent because the English equivalent perhaps closest would be Kashmiri-ness or Kashmirized does not allow one to read various changes which have occurred over the period in the sense it has been used.

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(emphasis added)

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Gowhar Yaqoob is a Srinagar (Kashmir) based independent researcher. She was formerly Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla (2015-2017). Her research practice focuses on literary and visual cultures in history with an emphasis on interdisciplinary approach. Her work interrogates broader themes of nationalist identities in a nation-state, manuscript and print culture and language politics in particular in Kashmir. She has been involved in translation projects, translating from Kashmiri and Urdu into English.

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